



General Assembly

January Session, 2007

Raised Bill No. 7132

LCO No. 4330

04330_____AGE

Referred to Committee on Select Committee on Aging

Introduced by:
(AGE)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE AVAILABILITY OF HEARING AIDS FOR ELDERLY PERSONS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2007*) (a) The Commissioner of
2 Social Services shall, within available appropriations, establish a
3 program to provide financial assistance to elderly persons who require
4 the use of hearing aids. Eligibility for participation in the program
5 shall be limited to any resident (1) who is sixty-five years of age or
6 older, (2) whose current annual income at the time of application or
7 redetermination, if unmarried, is less than twenty-three thousand one
8 hundred dollars or whose annual income, if married, when combined
9 with that of the resident's spouse is less than thirty-one thousand one
10 hundred dollars, (3) who is not insured under a policy that provides
11 full or partial coverage for hearing aids once a deductible is met, and
12 (4) who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the commissioner that an
13 otolaryngologist, licensed under chapter 370 of the general statutes or
14 audiologist licensed under chapter 399 of the general statutes has
15 determined that a hearing aid is medically necessary for such resident.
16 The commissioner shall provide financial assistance to a resident

17 satisfying the eligibility criteria in an amount not to exceed twenty-five
 18 per cent of the total cost of the hearing aid. The commissioner shall
 19 annually increase the income limits established under this subsection
 20 over those of the previous fiscal year to reflect the annual inflation
 21 adjustment, if any, in Social Security income. Each such adjustment
 22 shall be determined to the nearest one hundred dollars. For purposes
 23 of this section, "hearing aid" means any wearable instrument or device
 24 designed for or offered for the purpose of aiding or compensating for
 25 impaired human hearing and any parts, attachments or accessories,
 26 excluding batteries, earmolds and cords.

27 (b) The commissioner, pursuant to section 17b-10 of the general
 28 statutes, may implement policies and procedures to administer the
 29 provisions of this section while in the process of adopting such policies
 30 and procedures as regulation, provided the commissioner prints notice
 31 of the intent to adopt the regulation in the Connecticut Law Journal
 32 not later than twenty days after the date of implementation. Such
 33 policy shall be valid until the time final regulations are adopted.

34 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2007*) The sum of one million dollars is
 35 appropriated to the Department of Social Services, from the General
 36 Fund, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, for the purpose of
 37 providing financial assistance to persons eligible for the program
 38 established pursuant to section 1 of this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To provide financial assistance to low-income elderly persons who are in need of hearing aids.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]